THE

Bishop of *Peterborough's*

SERMON

BEFORE

The House of LORDS,

January 30th, 1719.

Die Lunæ, 1° Februarii, 1719.

ORdered by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament aſſembled, That the Thanks of this Houſe be, and are hereby given to the Lord Biſhop of Peterborough, *for the Excellent Sermon by him preached before this Houſe, on* Saturday *the Thirtieth of* January *laſt, in the Abbey-Church of* Weſtminſter: *And he is hereby deſired to cauſe the ſame to be forthwith Printed and Publiſhed.*

W. Cowper, *Cler' Parliament'*

BRITISH MUSEUM

694. f. 2
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A

SERMON

Preached before the

Lords *Spiritual* and *Temporal*,

IN THE

ABBEY-CHURCH

AT

WESTMINSTER,

The xxxth of *January*, M.DCC.XIX.

By the Right Reverend Father in GOD,

WHITE Lord Biſhop of *Peterborough*.

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LONDON;

Printed for W. TAYLOR at the Ship in *Pater-noſter-Row*. M.DCC.XX.

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St. MARK xiv. 19.

And they began to be ſorrowful, and to ſay unto him, one by one, Is it I? And another ſaid, Is it I?

IF we ſeriouſly reflect on the National Sin and Shame of this Day, that have blacken'd it into a ſtated *Day of Rebuke and Trouble*; we muſt needs, as the Accuſed in the Text, *begin to be ſorrowful*, and to have (tho at the diſtance of above Seventy Years) ſome Pain, ſome Shock upon us, that ſo *horrible* a *thing* ſhould have been once committed in our Land: That a great Prince, a good Man, a devout Chriſtian, diſtreſſed by Factions, betrayed by Friends, ſubdued by Arms, confined in Priſons, diſappointed in Eſcapes, ſhould be at laſt brought forth to an ignominious Trial, to an execrable Sen-

tence, and even to a barbarous Execution of it, for a Spectacle before his own Palace, as in a Triumph and Inſult over the Laws of God and Man! And what Impulſe had the Actors in it, but that of Ambition, Revenge, and Thirſt of Blood? To what End, but to overthrow the Fences of Government, Liberty, and Religion; and to pick up they knew not what in the Ruins of the Foundations of Church and State?

And yet poſſibly, if any Perſons, or any Parties of Men, were to be charged with this heinous Guilt of ſhedding Royal Blood; they would All throw off the odious Imputation of it: they would be ready to clear themſelves, and to juſtify themſelves, and to caſt the heavy Weight upon any Head but their own; they would take it ill to be accuſed, to be ſuſpected; they would *ſay one by one, Is it I? and another would ſay, Is it I?*

For ſo it was in this Hiſtory of our Saviour's Sufferings, (not to be parallel'd by any other) his being betrayed into the hands of wicked Men, and after cruel Mockings and Scourgings, brought forth as a Malefactor to die the moſt dolorous and infamous Death. He foreſaw all he was to ſuffer; he was now opening the mournful Scene to his Diſciples at Supper; and would intimate unto them, that what grieved him moſt of all his Sorrows, was to meet with ſuch Ingratitude and Treachery

chery ſo near unto his own Boſom; that one of his Companions, his Friends, his choſen Diſciples, who had received his Commiſſion, and called him Lord, that one of them ſhould ſell him, and betray him into wicked Hands. And therefore out of a deep Senſe of ſuch Inhumanity, our Bleſſed Maſter would expreſs ſome Reſentment, ſome Indignation at it: In the Verſe immediately before the Text, as the twelve *Diſciples were at Supper, Jeſus ſaid, Verily I ſay unto you, One of you which eateth with me ſhall betray me.* Where, I ſay, the ſenſible Pain and Anguiſh lay in this, that he ſhould fall a Sacrifice in his own Houſe; that in effect his own *Table* ſhould be made a *Snare* unto him, and he that eat of his *Bread* ſhould lift up his *Heel* againſt him. All the hard Sayings to be fulfilled in him; not an *open Enemy* to do him this Diſhonour, for then he could have born it; neither an *Adverſary*, for then peradventure he could have hid himſelf from him: But it was even *thou my Companion, my Guide, and mine own familiar Friend.* Said our Saviour to his own Subjects, to his own Domeſticks, *One of you which eateth with me, ſhall betray me.*

But who ſhould be that unworthy Man, that ungracious Wretch? Who could bear the Imputation, the remote Suſpicion of it? Who was it? Who could it poſſibly be? They could every one anſwer for themſelves, far be it from every one of them; they were

ſaying

ſaying vehemently, *one by one, Is it I? and another*, the very Criminal, *ſaid, Is it I?*

From hence, and from our daily Experience we learn, that there is ſuch a natural Reproach in Sin and Wickedneſs, eſpecially in all Treachery and baſe Cruelty, that People are impatient to bear any part of the Burden of it; they would ſhift it off elſewhere, they would thruſt it upon any Shoulders to eaſe their own.

As in the Caſes of the Text and of the Day, in both Caſes (Matters of Treaſon and Blood) *what Carefulneſs*; yea, what *clearing* of themſelves; yea, what *Indignation*; yea, what *Fear*; yea, what *vehement Deſire*; yea, what *Zeal* to *approve* themſelves to be *clear* in this *Matter?* In the firſt Inſtance before us of Servants betraying their Lord and Maſter, no one guilty; not only the ſeveral that were really innocent juſtified themſelves, as they had a Right to do, but even the Traytor himſelf was as forward to vindicate his own Honour: Even *Judas* ſaid among the reſt, *Lord, Is it I?*

For ſo I think the wording of the Text may be underſtood, tho our Tranſlation does not come up to it. They who were truly ſorrowful, or heartily concerned to think that their Maſter ſhould be betray'd by one among themſelves, they were the *eleven* Diſciples, not let into the horrid Secret; they could with an honeſt Reſentment ſay, one by one, to the number of eleven, each for himſelf, *Is*

it

it I? But then comes the twelfth Diſciple, here called *another*, perhaps rather ὁ ἄλλος, *the other*, the remaining Diſciple, *Judas*; who for fear his Silence ſhould have given Conſent to the Conſciouſneſs in his own Mind, he likewiſe ſaid, *Is it I?* He likewiſe would be able to ſtand as fair as the beſt of them; he could demurely and boldly ask, *Is it I?*

This Senſe of the Text, tho not obſerved by Commentators, is ſupported, or rather expreſs'd by St. *Matthew* xxvi. 25. After all but *Judas* had been exceeding ſorrowful, and *began every one of them to ſay unto him, Lord, is it I?* after ſome Pauſe, then *Judas*, who betrayed him, anſwered and ſaid, *Maſter, is it I?* Jeſus ſaid unto him, *Thou haſt ſaid*; you betray your Guilt by your officious Forwardneſs in the Denial of it. So that 'tis very plain, the Perſons who had no hand in it ought not to ſuffer the Reproach of it; and yet as plain, that the one Criminal out of his own Mouth would be Not Guilty. He made ſtrange of it, he preſumed to appeal to the Judge of all Hearts, to him who knew what was in Man, to him he had the Aſſurance to ſay, *Maſter, is it I?*

The Reaſon of Sinners thus purging themſelves, is the natural Turpitude and the ſelf-conſcious Shame in Sin and Wickedneſs. When Men have committed the Guilt, they would ſtill decline the Odium of it. Hence

all the manifold Inventions of concealing, diſguiſing, palliating, and miſrepreſenting of every Criminal Cauſe, to appear excuſable at leaſt, or rather to have no manner of Concern in it. And this indeed is at the bottom of all Hypocriſy and Falſhood, I mean the natural Stain and Reproach of Wickedneſs. Men would adventure to be wicked, to be exceeding ſinful, and yet they would not willingly reveal themſelves; they care not to ſeem Reprobates, they cannot eaſily aſſume the Airs of *glorying* in their *Shame*, they would deny, or they would ſmooth and ſoften, or they would even ſanctify their Crimes; as if the *leſs honourable* and *more uncomely Parts* of their Soul were to have the *more abundant Honour* beſtowed upon them.

So began Original Sin in the Nature and Conſtitution of Things and Men; the Sinners could not bear the Weight of their own Guilt, they were ſhifting the Scene of Wickedneſs from one to another: *Adam* repreſented it to be the Fault of the Woman, and ſhe laid it to the Charge of the Serpent; and the Searcher of Hearts only could determine the controverted Matter. Hence Men abhor the being thought capable of Crimes which they are afterwards drawn into; they diſown their being ſubject to any Temptations of them: Far be it from their Intentions to con-

ceive this or that abominable Wickedneſs, which yet at laſt they commit without any Remorſe upon them.

This Deceitfulneſs of Sin prevailed on the Traytor in the Text: And it was much the ſame with a better Diſciple, St. *Peter*, who was likely to fall into another Snare of the Devil, the *denying* his Lord and Maſter: He at firſt abhorred the Thoughts of it; it was impoſſible that he ſhould ever be the Man, the falſe ungrateful Man. And therefore when our Saviour told his Diſciples of their falling away from him, St. *Mat.* xxvi. 31. *All ye ſhall be offended becauſe of me*; it was St. *Peter* who put in the firſt Proteſtation againſt the approaching Fact, *Tho all Men ſhall be offended becauſe of thee, yet will I never be offended.* Nay when *Jeſus*, who knew his Infirmities, told him within what time, and how often he ſhould deny him, yet he ſtood it out with the utmoſt Aſſurance, *Tho I ſhould die with thee, yet will I not deny thee*: when after all he committed and repeated that Sin of Unfaithfulneſs, and could not but *weep bitterly* to think how frail he had been.

It was, if poſſible, a greater Failure in *Hazael* King of *Syria*; he deprecated the very Thoughts of doing what he dared to do: When he came a Meſſenger to *Eliſha*, the Prophet ſaw in him ſuch Indications of a wicked Mind, that the Man of God wept

at the Preſages of his doing Evil, 2 *Kings* viii. 11. But *Hazael* wiped his Forehead, and ſaid, *Why weepeth my Lord?* When the Prophet anſwered, *Becauſe I know the Evil that thou wilt do to the Children of* Iſrael; *their Strong-holds wilt thou ſet on fire, and their young Men wilt thou ſlay with the Sword, and wilt daſh their Children, and rip up their Women with Child*: *Hazael* ſtarted from the Imputation of ſuch Barbarities as theſe were: Could he be thought ſuch a Brute, the vileſt of them? *What! is thy Servant ſuch a Dog, that he ſhould do this thing?* And yet when he came into Power and Opportunity, he did it all, and added other Effects of unbounded Tyranny and Oppreſſion.

From theſe Truths, directly within the Compaſs of the Text, (and alas! fatally within the Occaſion of the Day) we might learn many ſuitable Inferences and Leſſons of Honeſty and Wiſdom.

I. *Firſt*, We might obſerve, that when Men are unhappily imbark'd in a bad Cauſe, they know not how far they ſhall go, or be puſh'd on in the purſuit of it; farther than they at firſt imagin'd: Step after Step in Wickedneſs, till they are plung'd in beyond their Aim, and beyond their Depth; they have loſt themſelves, and all their firſt Intentions. It was undoubtedly ſo with the Beginners of thoſe fatal

fatal Feuds that brought about this Day of Confuſion: Moſt of them of any Senſe could mean only the tender Defence of Liberties and Religion. Many of them receded, when they diſcovered a worſe Intention in it; but alas! too many proceeded farther on, till they found it too late to look backward, till Things were deſperate, till the Leaders thought it neceſſary to add Iniquity to Iniquity, Murder to Rebellion.

II. And therefore we might, *Secondly*, infer, that this growing State of Wickedneſs will ſpread moſt of all in the Enterprizes of Faction and Sedition, of Treaſon and Rebellion. Some of the chief Promoters of this Day's Evil had been once in Favour and good Graces with their Sovereign, and ſo long they ſcorn'd to be ſuſpected of the leaſt Diſloyalty; their Hearts were ſaid to be *true*, and yet, alas! how *deceitful* were thoſe Hearts? They had not all they asked or expected, they were ſour'd upon ſome Repulſe, or grew ſullen at ſome Delay; *then* they ſecretly repined, they begun openly to murmur, their Paſſions drew them to another ſide, they grew oppoſite to their former Friends, and acted in Contradiction to their former Pretenſions, till they were inſenſibly got out of their Reach, and out of their own Power; till they thought themſelves bound to go on, not knowing, not caring what would be in the end thereof.

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III. A third Inference might be, that Men ſhould ſtand faſt upon the antient Foundations and Boundaries of Law and Conſtitution; paying Loyalty and Allegiance according to Law; ſaving Rights and Liberties according to the ſame legal Security; conſidering Government as ordained for the common Good, a Body Politique for the mutual Aid and Preſervation of Head and Members, no one to deſtroy or hurt the other, no Schiſm in the Body; a ſtated Superiority, and a regular Subordination, no Part ſeparate from the Whole; a common Intereſt, and ſome Balance of Power to preſerve it. On this Bottom our Forefathers ſtood, not as on a Seat unſhaken, nor can any on Earth be ſo eſtabliſh'd; but on a Baſis never utterly overthrown, till amidſt the Confuſions of this Day. Providence reſtored us to the ſame *Foundations* of Sovereignty and Subjection, bounded by Law for common Good. Let us reſt here, not moving, if poſſible, not leaning to the Right-hand, nor to the Left. Surely there is a Golden Mean, and a Center to reſt in; if we are drawn into any Extreme, we muſt be ſoon falling we know not where.

But to keep more immediately to the Senſe of the Text, may ſeem more directly to anſwer the Occaſion of the Day. A Day not to be inſulted with profane Contempt, nor to

be

be again polluted with Strife and Reproaches. A Day without queſtion of National Sin, and National Judgment. But who committed that Sin? who brought that Judgment on us? Hear one ſaying, *Is it I?* and another will ſay, *Is it I?* The different Parties (all, ſome way, concern'd) would be waſhing their own Hands of this Royal Blood, would be caſting all the Aſperſion of it on the Heads of thoſe they differ from.

1. How many looſe Writers, and other unreaſonable Men, have poured forth all the Blame upon the King alone, and the corrupt Miniſtry, and a perſecuting Church and Clergy. *They* muſt anſwer for all the following Changes and Calamities which they brought upon themſelves. It was, ſay they, the affecting of Arbitrary Power, the going into Popiſh Counſels and Foreign Meaſures. *This*, ſay they, kindled all the Fire that brake forth, and brought all the Fuel to it. A heavy Charge, wherein Men of any Inſight know there is a great want of Charity and Truth. Is there no diſtinguiſhing between the beginning of Murmurs and Diſcontents, and the Iſſues of Revenge and Fury? Is there no allowing for human Infirmities, and common Miſcarriages in every Reign? Is there to be no Acknowledgment, that in every Grievance Right was done, or offer'd to be done, and Conceſſions were made ſufficient to ſatisfy

wiſe

wiſe and good Men? And ſuppoſing the very worſt, muſt it be granted, that the King does all the Wrong, and that his Perſon muſt be tried by the People for it, without any Law, or any Precedent whatever? Thoſe Men who would ſo juſtify the horrid Fact, ſeem to labour to become guilty of it. It would raiſe our Indignation to have a common Friend barbarouſly murder'd, and then partially brought in *Felo de ſe*.

2. In Calumnies and Reproaches Men delight to be out of debt to one another: And therefore Men of different Sentiments put a different Turn upon their Adverſaries. They plead there was no manner of Offence given; it was pure Innocence and Merit on the *one* ſide; and that the wicked Deſigns, and evil Arts, and horrible Reſolutions were all entirely on the *other* ſide. The original Plot (ſay they) was for the utter Deſtruction of the King and Church: The Raiſers of the War (ſay they) were all Sectaries and Schiſmaticks, by Principle and by Covenant Enemies to the Crown and the whole Conſtitution; Antimonarchical, Republican, Rebels, Regicides, and what not? Eſpecially the *Presbyterians*, (and they have enlarged that Denomination) *they* are treading always in their Fathers Steps, and therefore are to be branded and purſued as publick Enemies for ever. We muſt likewiſe confeſs ſuch bitter

Words

Words to be uncharitable and untrue; the Remonstrances, the Tumults, the very drawing of the Sword began in no Name but that of his Majesty's Subjects, &c. the dividing into multiplied Sects and religious Parties was rather the sad Consequence of those Troubles, than the Cause of them. However, of those various Parties, the old *Puritans*, who made up the bulk of the *Presbyterians*, were the most sober-minded, had the least Disposition towards the Iniquity of this Day, made solemn Protestations against it, and did endeavour to atone for it.

3. And now hear the common Adversary, the *Papists*, they take their Advantage of these mutual Revilings among us. They pretend themselves, and their glorious Church, to have been the only faithful Adherents to the King; that *they* honestly supplied Him with Money, Arms, and Men; and offer'd to supply him with Foreign Aid, with Catholick Troops to defend and deliver him from the Curse of Heresy and Schism. We have no Time to reply, but in a word: That of all Parties *they* had the fullest Hand in sowing those Tares that grew up, and were kindled into Flames. *They* gave the main Occasion to Fears and Jealousies: *They* made the bloody Massacre of Protestants to be the loudest Alarm to Self-Defence and Preservation: *They* labour'd, tho in vain, to possess the King; *they*

poſſeſs'd the neareſt to his Boſom; *they* corrupted his Royal Iſſue: and, to avoid ſpeaking of their Inſults at his Death, of their accommodating Principles to it, of their embaraſſing the Affairs of his Succeſſor, I muſt have leave to think, that they were the leaſt inſtrumental in the Happy *Reſtoration*, however inſolent upon it.

This, for Brevity, was omitted in the Speaking.

[Nay, they had made his Return in Peace utterly impracticable, if they had given the Nation any Evidence, any ſtrong Suſpicion, that He was reconciled to their Church of *Rome*. For the Body of the Nation well knew, that Goſpel-Faith and Worſhip, that legal Rights and Liberties, could not be maintain'd by a *Popiſh* Prince.—— We may call to mind, that our *Saxon* Anceſtors, even under a thick Veil of Superſtition, would not bear their Sovereign Princes going in Perſon to *Rome*, till they had firſt quitted their Crown and Regal Dignity. It was ſo with our firſt Royal Wanderer *Ceadwalla*, An. 688. An abdicated Prince, and then a Pilgrim. *Relicto Imperio propter dominum regnumq; perpetuum venit Romam. Aſſer. Men. ſub anno.* So his next Succeſſor *Ina*, *Et ipſe relicto Imperio ac junioribus commendato ad limina beatorum Apoſtolorum Gregorio Pontificatum tenente profectus eſt.* ib. It

was.

was the same with *Kenred*, *Offa*, and other weak Princes. The first Instance to the contrary, I think, was *Ethelwolph*, who adventur'd to go as a crowned Head to *Rome*, An. 855. But this was thought such an Indignity to the Realm of *England*, that it occasion'd great Confusions. For in his Absence it was in effect declar'd, that he had forfeited his Rights, that he ought not to be Received as King, but be Rejected and Disown'd for ever. Nor could he enter and enjoy his former State, till he had resign'd one of his two Kingdoms, and impoverish'd the Land with a continual Tribute to the See of *Rome*. *Adhelbaldus Rex Adelwolphi Regis filius & Ealstanus Scireburnensis Ecclesiæ Episcopus, Eanulphus quoque Sumurtunensis pagi Comes conjurasse referuntur, ne unquam Adelwolfus Rex a Roma revertens iterum in Regno reciperetur.——— Ne irremediabile Saxonie periculum belligerante Patre cum Filio, quin immo tota cum Gente ambobus rebellantibus, atrocius & crudelius per dies singulos quasi clades intestina augeretur: ineffabili Patris clementia, omniumq; astipulatione Nobilium, adunatum antea Regnum inter Patrem & Filium dividitur.— Roma quoque omni anno trecentas mancusas denariorum portare præcepit, &c. Flor. Wigorn. sub anno* 855.]

But thus, I say, all Parties would amuse the World by inveighing one against the other.

Each would cry out againſt his Neighbour, *Thou* art the Man: The Guilt and the Vengeance of that Blood be on *Thee* and thy Seed for ever. Whereas, in truth, among all the deplorable Divitions, there was no one Denomination of People, but what were more or leſs found Partakers of the Sin of this Day. Let none be too officious in vindicating themſelves: None too eager in upbraiding others. The Load is not All on any *one* Side. The Princes, the Prieſts, the People, the Nation were to blame; and we have All of us reaſon ſo far to mourn and to repent, and to bring forth the *Fruits worthy* of a National *Repentance*.

The Limits of my Diſcourſe and your Patience will not ſuffer me to enter into a wide Field, that ſeems to open upon us: But ſuffer me, *My Lords*, to ſuggeſt a few Things, and to leave them in Suggeſtion only.

I. Firſt, I would ſuggeſt, That at the time of ſhedding this Royal Blood, All, but the Part of an High Court of Juſtice, ſo called, and a certain Band of Officers, pretended to be clear of it. They did all in effect, as *Pilate* at the condemning of our Holy Maſter *Jeſus*; not only their Wives had a more tender Regard, but they themſelves could waſh their own Hands before the Multitude, We are innocent, ſee ye to it. As *Pilate*

threw

threw it on the People; they on the Chief Priests, they on the *Pharisees*, and they again on *Jesus* himself, as guilty and deserving to die; so here, if we arraign the Body of the Nation, it is pleaded that there were opposite Powers, and distinct Armies, and equal Strength for a long while. If we look toward the two Houses, we can find but one, and that a Refuse of the Dregs that were left behind. If we lay the Charge on a prevailing Army, even there it is objected, that the General himself knew little of it, that the Soldiers were under Command and Pay, and that some of the Chief Officers, when called to account for it, excused themselves in being bound to obey Orders, and not to dispute the Reason of them.

II. Secondly, I would suggest, That tho all Parties and Persons (a very few excepted) would justify themselves, and would cast the odious Imputation upon others; yet in truth All were culpable more or less; some as Principals, some as Accessaries, some as mere Tools, or as idle Standers-by; for even among the Royal Party, some, I doubt, were hanging on the Wheels of the Chariot, not thinking that they did but help others to overturn it. Some retired to act a negative Part of Silence and Safety. Some were haftily purchasing their own Peace at the Ex-

pence

pence of the Publick: Some were flying into Foreign Parts, or any Places of Refuge, till they thought the Storm might be overpaſs'd: Some few revolted to the conquering Side. Impoſſible that an united Intereſt of the King's Friends could ever have permitted the Scandal of this Day!

III. I would, Thirdly, ſuggeſt, That at this Diſtance of Time, after a third or fourth Generation, it doth not ſo much concern us to be contending and reviling, and to turn this Day of Faſting and Mourning into *a Day of Strife and Debate*; as it does concern us, and will concern our Poſterity, to mark and to avoid all thoſe Steps and Snares that led Men on to this fatal Deſtruction of King, and Church, and State. This Caution concerns all manner of People, and thoſe more eſpecially who have made the loudeſt Outcries againſt their Brethren upon the Occaſion of this Day; for even *they*, by their own late Practices, have made it the more neceſſary to perpetuate the Obſervation of this Day, to keep it up for an everlaſting Sea-Mark, againſt ſplitting upon the ſame Rocks of Diſloyalty, Sedition, and open Rebellion.

So many were the Deluſions of Men, and the Devices of the Devil on that Occaſion, that the time will not ſuffice to be particular in them.

1. One

1. One of the chief was a ſtrange Infatuation in the Minds of People tending to Enthuſiaſm, and unaccountable Conceits and Prejudices in Matters of Religion and Government. If the Nation had been ſober-minded, it had been impoſſible to have brought thoſe things to bear. But when Mens Heads were warm'd and turn'd with a miſtaken Zeal, and a Contempt of Knowledge; *then* they were capable of the abſurdeſt Notions, of the vaineſt Imaginations; they could believe they knew not what, and muſt impoſe that Belief on others. And ſo Blaſphemy, Nonſenſe, any Illegality, any Impiety could be obtruded in the Name of Divine Right and the Cauſe of God. On that Rock let us ſplit no more; let us labour at leaſt to keep People in their right Minds, and, if poſſible, to recover thoſe who have been ſpirited away into ſtrong Deluſions. In Religion, let us direct Men to ſound Reaſon, and to plain Scripture. In Government, let us refer them to Laws and Conſtitutions; and to the Grounds and Foundation of all Government, the Publick Safety and the Common Good. Unleſs we are on this Bottom of Scriptural Inſtitutions and Legal Eſtabliſhments; we give Men a Looſe to the wildeſt Fancies of making and believing their own Inventions, and periſhing in them.

2. Another unhappy Step towards the Evil of this Day, was humouring that Madneſs of

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the People by seditious Preaching to them, and poisoning their Hearts continually with more and more Discontent and Disaffection to their Lawful Governours. Surely the Preachers of the Gospel should have kept to the Tenour of it, Peace, and Quiet, and Obedience for Conscience sake; and as they found the Multitude more inclined to Faction, they should the more in season have *put them in mind* to be subject to the Powers set over them by Law, the Ordinance of *Man*, the Ordinance of *God*. But alas! on the contrary, some who served at the Altar were daily fetching Fire from it, and were blowing up the People with Fears and Jealousies, with Prejudices and false Surmises, to alienate their Affections from the settled Government; and this, in the Name of God, and from the very Word of God. And tho' these were commonly of the younger and more inferiour Clergy, yet by the Iniquity of the Times they grew Popular, and able to be prime Incendiaries of the Civil War, and to carry it on to the *Great Rebellion*. Let following Ages take heed, that they who are commissioned to preach the Gospel of Christ, do keep within the Bounds of that Commission, *i. e.* our common Faith and Salvation, and the publick Peace and Happiness. To poison the Flock, is far from the feeding of it. In such cases of Infection, the Sheep, what have they done?

but

but these *Shepherds*, what have they to answer for?

3. Another of the wicked Arts to widen those Breaches, was by idle Tales of Calumny and Defamation; by spreading false Rumours and the most incredible Stories, to turn aside the Minds of People, to affright them, and exasperate them against the Government. Some were employ'd to invent sad Stories, tho but for the Service of a Day; others were sent to and fro (like so many Messengers of Satan) to spread about the terrible Accounts of Things, and to vouch for them; and the poor People, who believed them, were impatient to tell every one his Neighbour; and every one in their Affrightments added something more, till a *Lying Spirit* seem'd to be gone forth as a Judgment upon the Land, and People at last could repeat and affirm Stories which they *knew* to be false; and such Sinners might be past Shame, even upon this Day.

4. But from hence came the next Forerunner of Ruin, the Spiriting up the common People into Riots and Tumults, and so pushing them forward to Insurrections and Rebellion; they were taught Grievances, and a Right to have them redress'd in their own Way: Justice was to be a Demand in the Streets; the meanest of the People were instructed and managed to gather in the Night, and to ap-

pear at Noon-Day; and to beſiege Palaces and Parliament-Houſes. Surely there wanted Law, or there wanted Spirit to ſuppreſs them. By their not being timely ſuppreſs'd, a ſmall Gang became a Party; the Parties grew into a Body, and that Body into Troops and Armies; By a ſort of gradual Advance, like that of Streams and Torrents, lo! the *Brook* became a *River*, and the *River* became a *Sea*.

5. In all this muſt be underſtood the leading Cauſe of All, the Corruption and general Depravation of Manners, that uſher'd in that Stupidity, and thoſe Calamities upon us. The Liberties of the Stage, and indecent Repreſentations, and vitious Interviews, that came in a little before the beginning of thoſe Troubles, had tended much to ſoften and taint the Minds of People. They grew familiar with what their Anceſtors abhor'd. A viſible Profaneneſs in ſome, had caſt others into Hypocriſy and outward Appearance only. Between both, the Chriſtian Simplicity abated, the Moral Honeſty decay'd; nay, Humanity itſelf gave way to Diſappointment, Wrath, and Revenge. For the moſt part, the ſerving upon Principle was dropt, the Craft was to ſerve for Intereſt, and during Advantage; to watch the Riſe and Fall of Policies; to underſtand Benefits, and the Gain or Loſs of them; or even ſometimes to adventure All upon Humour, Will, and Plea-

ſure.

ſure. So that Inſtability, Ingratitude, Anger, and every evil thing (that could poſſibly ariſe from Immorality and Irreligion) had a fatal influence on the Riſe and Increaſe of thoſe deplorable Troubles.

But to conclude; There is ſtill a Debt of Thankfulneſs to God, that when we have been juſtly deploring the Sins and Follies, and Calamities of thoſe Times, eſpecially the Blackneſs and Horrour of this Day; we ſhould caſt an Eye upon the Beams of Comfort that ſoon brake forth again: After the *Sun-ſetting*, as it were at this *Noon-Day*, there was indeed a thick Cloud, and horrible Darkneſs upon us for near twelve Years; but then came the *Morning*, and Joy with it: A Year of Jubilee, a Month of double Bleſſings; the peaceable Return of one King, and the auſpicious Birth of another. One to bring Peace and legal Settlement, the other to renew them, and inſure them, we hope, for many Generations to come. For if we can truſt our own Hopes, nay, if we can truſt our own Experiences, the good Providence of God will not ſuffer us to be again made a Sacrifice to unreaſonable Men. Pray we, That the Brightneſs of that Divine Providence may open every day more and more, in favour and honour of the King, in protection and ſafety of the Church and State, in ſupport of the Proteſtant Intereſt; and

and finally, in the Repose and even Balance of all Europe. And oh! let the Goodness of God, that we have so liberally tasted, incline us All to amend our ways, to be wise, and vertuous, and conscientious; to lead quiet and *peaceable* Lives, in all Godliness and Honesty; that we may be worthy to give *Glory* unto God on high, to see *Peace* upon Earth, and *Good-will* towards Men.

FINIS.